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COMMITTEE III: RADIO AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

PRINCIPLES

What part should radio play in the program of educational institutions,
schools and university
notably public schools and universities?

This ~~That part~~ depends primarily *on* the degree of responsibility which the
particular institution accepts *and can effectively fulfill* in pursuing the general aims of education.

Those aims, according to President George Stoddard, are (1) the development of a structure of thought, and (2) the improvement of human relations. In the words of Charles Siepmann, the aims of education should be (1) to help the individual acquire the facts he needs, and (2) to clothe those facts with significance.

Unquestionably, public education in a democracy has the responsibility of lifting the level of understanding and appreciation of the people, of giving the individual a knowledge of himself and his society and of the sources of tensions and perplexities in each. In a free society it is essential that the individual have a continuing sense of belonging and participating, of keeping up with a complex and fast-changing world. It is a responsibility of education, obviously, to foster and further that feeling of belonging and counting.

The modern university recognizes that responsibility in many ways. It takes steps to share its benefits. It conducts extension services—correspondence courses, off-campus classes, itinerant teachers. It holds conferences and institutes. It sets up short courses and refresher classes. Its faculty members provide consulting services for business, industry, labor, and government. It establishes a press and publishes serious books.

The present-day university, especially the publicly supported university, must acknowledge that it cannot exist as a repository. It cannot be merely a storehouse of accumulated knowledge where young people come to make selections off the shelves. True, it must enjoy some detachments in order that certain kinds of thinking can be carried on, free from the pressure of necessity for action. At the same time, it must function as a part of the on-going society which sustains it. It must share its talents, knowledge, and understanding not only with the young people who attend for specific training but with people generally who look to the university for guidance and wisdom in meeting the world's problems. It must supply standards and principles for the critical evaluation of life.

This sense of outreach and responsibility to the remote citizen found expression in the statement of an early president of a midwestern state university, Charles R. Van Hise, who said when president of the University of Wisconsin: "I shall not rest content until the beneficent influences of the University are available in every home in the state." The same sense of responsibility finds expression in slogans such as "The Boundaries of the Campus are the Boundaries of the State," or "The Statewide Campus!"

Essentially, the educator is the public servant entrusted with the operation of educational agencies set up by society for a two-fold purpose: first, for perpetuating the attained stage of social progress by handing on the best in the established patterns of thought; and, second, for preparing the way for the orderly correction of recognized shortcomings of human society. The educator's problem is that of holding fast to that which is true and of good report, while ever encouraging the fearless searching and sifting by which alone the truth can be found.

The educator is, then, both custodian and explorer. But of what ^{general} benefit are his discoveries - his new truths and new interpretations - if they are concealed? ^{Q or should only wait} What contribution can he make to the improvement of human relationships if he does not communicate his ideas effectively? How can he reach and serve the youth or adult who happens not to be in class or on campus? How can he make available "the beneficent influences of the university" in every home in the state?

RW Only by using one of the mass media can a solution be found for this problem. And radio is the only one of the mass media to which universities have satisfactory access. Radio provides the obvious answer to such questions.

Here is a means of reaching quickly and repeatedly large numbers of people - not in the mass but as individuals. Here is an open door into the homes of people of all types - young and old, plain and sophisticated, schooled and unschooled. Here is an instrument touching many who are intellectually and emotionally hungry, and many more who do not recognize their needs. Here is a means of access to countless special interest groups, to people dispersed over wide areas, to various publics. Here is a point of contact with intellectually curious people who have learned to expect too little that is serious and significant from a broadcasting service that concentrates on entertainment. And here are neglected fields of human thought and activity --- political understanding, mental health, child development, and the whole area of ^{human adjustment} ~~social life~~ --- where the ground is virtually unbroken or uncultivated.

Presented with such an opportunity and confronted with the responsibility for outreach and dissemination, what are the specific responsibilities of the university and the public school system with regard to radio? They appear to be four-fold and to fall into the following general areas: (1) Programming, (2) Audience building, (3) Radio research, and (4) Radio in the curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Programming. Except in limited sections of three or four states the adult listener has not had access to continuing, well organized courses of instruction in various subject areas over a period of years. Nevertheless, there is considerable evidence that formal education on the air does attract and hold substantial numbers of listeners. The state universities of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, among others, have broadcast regular university courses direct from the ~~lect~~ classrooms and lecture halls for many years. Response and reactions come from a wide range of listeners, pointing up a deeply-felt need and eagerness to learn.

Impressive evidence has likewise been accumulated in the area of programs for schools. In several states and a score of cities broadcasts specifically designed for classroom use are adding vitality and enrichment to the ordinary school curriculum. They are demonstrating the effectiveness and economy of radio as a teaching tool in a way that indicates others should follow the practice.

The opportunities for educating in ways less formal than college courses are great and schools of the air are numerous and inviting. They cover listener needs for counsel on ~~housework~~ homemaking, farming, child care, health, and the many areas of social life referred to previously. They call for a vast variety of broadcast services provided on a regular and continuing basis by the socially responsive educator.

Radio stations are required by federal regulation to operate in the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." Too often broadcasting is designed merely to satisfy listener "interest" and "convenience". But what of public "necessity," or the needs of the people? ~~Advertisers can be depended upon to discover physical needs and attempt to satisfy them.~~

But ~~who~~^{who} shall be concerned with the needs of the mind? No, if not the public educator? Here is a ~~function~~^{area} of broadcasting that can be discharged only when the educator fully recognizes his obligation and his opportunity.

Audience building. The university which undertakes to discharge its responsibility in broadcasting must first banish the concept of radio listeners as a mass. Listeners are individuals. And although an individual will listen to far more serious things than he reads, unending ~~patience~~^{patience} is required before a change takes place in his fundamental attitudes. Moreover, he needs continuing help in recognizing his prejudices and in maintaining his taste for serious fare. The educational broadcaster has, then, the task of discovering needs, stimulating awareness, and making use of motivations to overcome the resistance most people have to exercise of the mind. The job is two-fold, for the educator is obliged constantly to attract listeners by converting unrecognized needs into wants at the same time he produces appealing and rewarding programs. Presentation of the program alone is not enough. The people ~~is~~^{it} is designed to serve must, by all available means, be sought out and induced to listen.

Radio research. How does one teach by radio? What are the limitations and possibilities of the process of learning? How shall radio be used to communicate with various types of people? What symbols, which stereotypes, what vocabulary range can be used? What influence, on a ~~long-range~~^{long-range} basis, is broadcasting having on attitudes and behavior? What are the unfilled needs and interests of the non-listener? Can positive improvement in the tastes, attitudes, and happiness of people be shown as evidence of the contribution of educational radio?

Here are basic questions dealing with the effects of this powerful medium of communication, yet few answers are known and some areas almost totally unexplored. Here, plainly, is a rich and fertile field for the

university social scientist, for the experimenter and researcher. Here are problems in human behavior and relationships of such depth and complexity that they call for the most intensive and profound research.

Radio in the Curriculum.

Surveys reveal that the average person spends more time listening to the radio than he gives to any other activity except working and sleeping. Paradoxically, that person has spent years learning to read, write, and speak -- but has received little or no educational guidance in listening. If this enormous listening activity is to have a maximum constructive effect, the art of listening must be taught and learned. Here, obviously, is an area of neglected responsibility for the university and the public school system. The "art of listening" must become an integral part of the learning process.

In another area the educator has an equal, if not a greater, responsibility -- in teaching an understanding of the place of radio in our society. The student in the world of today must be made aware of the enormity of the instrumentality, its place in the era of electronic communications on a shrinking globe, and of its many-sided effects on the life of man.

Those agencies of education engaged in training teachers have a special obligation. Their students are entitled to full acquaintance with the many educational functions of radio and special instruction in the techniques of classroom use.

Finally, the university and the public school system must face the need of preparing professional workers in broadcasting, of supplying the creative and technical minds essential to growth and improvement. The teaching of certain skills and techniques will naturally be included, but

the emphasis in non-engineering classes at the university level must necessarily be placed on giving the student a sound, liberal education with full appreciation of the social importance of the medium and a sensitivity to the needs, as well as the wants, of the people who can be served by broadcasting.

Proposal.

The needs and aspirations of the individual in modern society are at once personal and collective, local and international. These needs and aspirations cannot be fully satisfied by the broadcast service of a single institution, no matter how extensive its resources.

To broaden the scope of education on the air, and to obtain the strength and advantage of joint effort, it is recommended that universities and major school systems take steps to provide a pooling of resources and offerings. It is recommended that educational administrators explore the possibilities of establishing a program service that would utilize the talents and tap the best program sources of this nation and other nations.

Specifically, it is proposed that a ten-year demonstration project be launched, financed perhaps by philanthropy, wherein two long-range, high-powered FM stations would be established in two separate sections of the country to provide a full and continuous schedule of educational, cultural programs. These programs would be available for rebroadcast by the local and regional educational stations within range, to supplement and reinforce their individual offerings.

Unless the listener has the benefit of some such national effort, providing regular and continuing broadcasts of high educational and cultural quality, the possibilities of radio as an instrument of social improvement will probably never be fully realized.

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